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Mikah

(Heb. Mikah)

Introduction

The prophets Mikah/Micah and Yeshayah (Isaiah) lived at the same time—Mikah came from a town in the southern kingdom of Yehudah. God revealed to Mikah the coming destruction to Yehudah that had been prophesied by the prophet Amos concerning the northern kingdom. Yahweh would punish the people due to their disobedient actions and due to his anger over their biased court decisions, but the account of prophet Mikah also talks about a hopeful future.
Now there are famous prophecies included in this document : Yahweh's announcement about ruling the entire world and bringing of peace/prosperity (4:1-4), the prophesying concerning the coming king from David's descendants bringing of peace/prosperity (5:2-5a); and the vital command taught by prophet Mikah there to Yisrael: "[Yahweh] has told humanity what is good, and what [he] requires from you: Act justly, love kindness, and walk humbly with your god." (6:8)

Main components of this document

The punishment of Yisrael and Yehudah *1:1–3:12*
The arrival of promised teacher of Yisrael bringing good living *4:1–5:15*
The warning and telling of hopefulness *6:1–7:20*

Lighter type marks additions. Underscores join parts of a single source word.
Struck words are untranslated. The ◘ sign marks a verse with no text.
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Readers' Version

1:1 This is Yahweh's message that came to Mikah (from Morashet) in the days of Yehudah's (Judah's) kings Yotam (Jotham),[1] Ahaz,[2] and Hizkiyah (Hezekiah),[3] that he saw concerning Shomron (Samaria) and Yerushalem (Jerusalem).

Shomron and Yerushalem's mourning · Both kingdoms

2 Listen, all you peoples.
Let the world and everything in it pay attention.
Let my master Yahweh be against you as a witness,
my master from his sacred temple
3 because wow, Yahweh comes out of his place.
He will come down and tread on the high places[4] of the earth.
4 The mountains will melt under him.
The valleys will break apart,
like wax that's near a fire,
like waters that are poured out from a steep place.
5 All that is because of Ya'akov's (Jacob's) disobedience,
and because of the sins of the Israeli people.
What was Ya'akov's transgression? Isn't it Shomron (Samaria)?
What is Yehudah's (Judah's) high place? Isn't it Yerushalem (Jerusalem)?
6 "I will make Shomron a heap of ruins in the countryside—
a place for planting vineyards.
Then I'll pour the stones from her buildings down into the valley
and I'll uncover her foundations.
7 All her carved statues will be smashed into pieces,
and all her wages will be burnt.
Yes, I'll totally destroy all her idols.
Since she used prostitutes' wages to pay for them,
the crushed pieces of idols will become prostitutes' wages again."
8 Because of that, I'll mourn and wail.
I'll go barefoot and undressed.
I'll wail like the jackals
and mourn like owls
9 because her wound is incurable.
Yes, it's come to Yehudah (Judah).
It's reached the gate of my people—reached Yerushalem (Jerusalem).

War is coming to Yerushalem · Southern kingdom

10 Don't tell about it in Gat.
Don't weep at all.
I roll myself in the dust at Beyt-Le'afrah (the house of dust).
11 Pass by undressed and humiliated, inhabitants of Shafir.
Don't come out, inhabitants of Tsa'anan.
Beyt-Haetsel mourns—its place to stand is taken from you
12 because the inhabitants of Marot wait anxiously for good,
because disaster has come down from Yahweh to Yerushalem's (Jerusalem's) gates.
13 Harness the chariot to the team of horses, inhabitants of Lakish.
She was the beginning of sin for the daughter of Tsiyon (Zion),
because Yisrael's (Israel's) transgressions were first found in you.
14 So you'll give parting gifts to Moreshet-Gat.
The town of Akziv will deceive Yisrael's kings.
15 I will again bring a conqueror to you, inhabitants of Mareshah.
Yisrael's best will come to Adulam.
16 Shave your head
and cut off your hair
for the children who you delight in.
Make yourselves as bald as eagles,
because they'll be taken from you and into exile.

Punishing the oppressors

2:1 Woe to those who plan to do wicked things—
to those who do evil on their beds.
They do it in the morning light
because they make use of their power.
2 They see fields that they'd like and seize them,
and houses and they just take them.
They'll oppress a man and his household—
even taking property handed down in the family.
3 Therefore Yahweh says,
"Listen, I'm planning to bring disaster against this clan,
which you won't be able to avoid.
You won't walk so proudly,
because it'll be a terrible time for you all.
4 In that day someone will sing a song against you all.
and mourn with a song of wailing,
and say, 'We're completely ruined.
Yahweh changes my people's territory.
How can he remove the land from me?
He divides our fields up to give to traitors.' "
5 Therefore, there'll be no one in Yahweh's assembly
who'll have authority to measure you out any more land.
6 "Don't tell us that,"
they tell us!
"They shouldn't preach those things—
that sort of disgrace will never happen to us."
7 Do Ya'akov's (Jacob's) descendants really ask,

1 **RV 1:1 · Cross-ref.** 2Ki 15:32-38; 2Ch 27:1-9.

2 **RV 1:1 · Cross-ref.** 2Ki 16:1-20; 2Ch 28:1-27.

3 **RV 1:1 · Cross-ref.** 2Ki 18:1–20:21; 2Ch 29:1–32:33.

4 **RV 1:3 · Note** Possibly referring to the pagan temples which were often constructed on hilltops.

Readers' Version

"Is the Yahweh's spirit impatient?
Are these his actions?"
Don't my words do good to anyone who obeys them?
8 Lately my people have risen up against me like an enemy.
You strip the rich robe off those who are innocently going past,
like a soldier on the battlefield might have done to his enemy.
9 You've driven our widows out of their pleasant houses.
You've forever deprived their young children of what I'd blessed them with.
10 Get ready and leave because this isn't a place for resting.
It's about to be completely destroyed because of its disobedience.
11 If someone comes to you full of talk and lies and says,
"I'll prophesy to you about enjoying wine and strong drink,"
he'd be considered to be a prophet for this people.
12 I will certainly gather all of you, Ya'akov (Jacob).
I'll definitely assemble the remnant of Yisrael (Israel).
I'll bring them together like sheep in a pen—
like a flock in the middle of their pasture.
Noisy because there'll be so many people.
13 Someone will go in front of them to break open the way.
They'll force open the gate and go out.
Their king will pass on ahead of them.
Yahweh will be at their head.

Scolding Yisrael's leaders and prophets · Both kingdoms

3:1 Then I said, "Now listen,
you leaders of Ya'akov (Jacob),
and rulers of the house of Yisrael (Israel):
Isn't it your responsibility to understand justice?
2 Those who hate good
and love evil,
those who tear their skin off them
and their flesh from their bones,
3 those who eat the flesh of my people,
and their skin that they've stripped off them,
they break their bones,
and chop them in pieces,
just like soup in a pot—
like meat in a cauldron.
4 Then they'll call out to Yahweh for help,
but he won't answer them.
He'll hide himself from them at that time,
because they've done evil things."
5 So Yahweh speaks out against the 'prophets' who lead his people astray:
"They lie through their teeth and proclaim, 'Peace.'
They're fighting against the one who never put a single word into their mouths.
6 Therefore, it'll be night for you prophets, without any visions.
It will be dark for you all, without any prophesying.
The sun will go down on the 'prophets',
and the day will be black for them.
7 The tellers of the future will be put to shame,
and the diviners will be disgraced.
They will cover their lips, all of them,
because there'll be no answer from God."
8 But I'm full of power from Yahweh's spirit,
and full of justice and strength,
to declare to Ya'akov (Jacob) his disobedience,
and to Yisrael (Israel) his sin.
9 Now listen to this,
you leaders of the house of Ya'akov,
and rulers of the house of Yisrael,
you all who detest justice,
and who take everything that's right and make it crooked.
10 You build Tsiyon (Zion) with blood
and Yerushalem (Jerusalem) with evil.
11 Her leaders judge for a bribe,
her priests teach for a price,
and her prophets do divination for money.
Yet they claim to depend on Yahweh, and they say,
"Isn't Yahweh right here with us?
Nothing bad can happen to us."
12 Therefore, because of you all,
Tsiyon (Zion) will become a ploughed field,
Yerushalem (Jerusalem) will become a heap of rubble,
and the temple hill will become covered with scrub.[5]

Yahweh's mountain · Both kingdoms[6]

4:1 In the last days it'll come about
that the mountain where Yahweh's residence is
will become more important than other mountains.
Then it'll be lifted above the hills,
and peoples will stream to it.
2 Many nations will go and say,
"Come, let's go up to Yahweh's mountain,
to the house of the Ya'akov's (Jacob's) god
so that he will teach us his ways,
and we will walk on his paths."
Because the law will go out from Tsiyon (Zion),
and Yahweh's message from Yerushalem (Jerusalem).
3 He'll judge among many peoples
and will arbitrate for strong countries far away.
They'll beat their swords into plough blades
and their spears into pruning hooks.
Nations won't attack other nations,
nor will they train for war any longer.

5 **RV 3:12 · Cross-ref.** Jer 26:18.

6 **RV 4:1 · Parallel** Isa. 2:2-4

Readers' Version

4 Then every person will be able to sit under their grapevine
and under their fig tree.
No one will make them afraid,[7]
because Commander-in-chief Yahweh has spoken.
5 All various people groups follow their own god,
but we will obey our god Yahweh's instructions
forever and ever.

Yisrael will return from exile · Both kingdoms

6 Yahweh declares: "At that time, I'll gather the lame people
and assemble those who were scattered—those who I've done harm to.
7 And I will turn those lame people into a growing group,
and those scattered ones into a strong nation,
and Yahweh will reign over them on Mt. Tsiyon (Zion),
from now and until forever.
8 And you, watchtower for the flock,
hill of the daughter of Tsiyon—
to you it will come—your former dominion will arrive—
the kingdom that belongs to the daughter of Yerushalem (Jerusalem).
9 Now, why do you shout so loudly?
Is it because you don't have a king?
Is it because your advisor passed away
that pain's gripping you like that of a woman in labour.
10 Be in pain and labour daughter of Tsiyon,
like a woman giving birth.
For now, you need to go out of the city
and live in the countryside.
Then you'll go to Bavel (Babylon) and be rescued from there.
There Yahweh will redeem you from your enemies' control.
11 Now many nations have assembled against you.
They say, 'Let her be overrun.
Let our eyes gloat over Tsiyon's fall.'
12 But those enemies don't know Yahweh's thoughts,
and they don't understand his plans,
because he's gathered them up like bundles of grain ready to be broken on the threshing floor.
13 Get going and thresh, daughter of Tsiyon,
because I'll make your horn into iron,
and I'll make your hooves into bronze.
And you'll break many peoples into pieces
and you'll confiscate their unjust earnings to devote to Yahweh—
their wealth will be for the master of the whole world."
5:1 Now come together in battle ranks, daughter of soldiers.
A siege has been set up against us.
They strike Yisrael's (Israel's) judge on the cheek with a rod.

God promises a ruler from Beyt-Lehem · Southern kingdom

2 But you, Beyt-Lehem (Bethlehem) Efratah,
even though you're insignificant among Yehudah's (Judah's) clans,
out of you, one will come to me to rule in Yisrael (Israel),
whose beginning is from ancient times—
from everlasting.[8]
3 Therefore God will hand them over to their enemies,
until the time when the woman in labour gives birth,
and the rest of his brothers return to the people of Yisrael.
4 He'll stand and shepherd his flock with Yahweh's strength,
in the majesty of the name of his god Yahweh.
They'll remain, because then he will be famous to the ends of the earth.
5 That one will be our peace.
When the Assyrians come into our land
and when they march against our fortresses,
then we'll raise seven shepherds against them
and eight leaders of men.

God's salvation and his vengeance

6 They'll shepherd the land of Ashur (Assyria) with the sword—
that country founded by Nimrod in its entrances.[9]
He'll rescue us from the Assyrians,
when they come into our land,
when they march inside our borders.
7 The remnant of Ya'akov (Jacob) will end up among many peoples,
like dew from Yahweh,
like showers on the grass,
that don't need help from any person,
and they don't rely on human intervention.
8 The remnant of Ya'akov will be among the nations,
among many peoples,
like a lion among the animals of the forest,
like a young lion among the flocks of sheep.
As he passes through them,
he'll trample over them and tear them to pieces,
and there'll be no one to save them.
9 You'll use your power against your enemies,
and they'll be destroyed.
10 Yahweh declares: "At that time,
I'll wipe out your horses
and demolish your chariots.
11 I'll destroy the cities in your country
and tear down all your fortresses.
12 I'll destroy the witchcraft that you practise,
and you'll no longer have any diviners.

7 **RV 4:4 · Cross-ref.** Zech 3:10.

8 **RV 5:2 · Cross-ref.** Mat 2:6; Yhn 7:42.

9 **RV 5:6 · Cross-ref.** Gen 10:8-11.

Readers' Version

13 I'll destroy your carved statues,
and the engraved stone pillars from among you.
You'll no longer worship the workmanship of your hands.
14 I'll topple your Asherah poles where you worship,
and I'll destroy your cities.
15 In my anger, I'll execute vengeance
on the nations that haven't obeyed.

Yahweh's challenge to Yisrael · Full kingdom

6:1 Now listen to what Yahweh says,
"Take action, present your case to the mountains.
and let the hills hear your voice.
2 Listen to Yahweh's lawsuit, you mountains,
and you enduring foundations of the earth,
because Yahweh has a lawsuit with his people,
and he'll present evidence against Yisrael (Israel)."
3 "My people, what have I done to you?
How have I worn you down?
Present your case against me.
4 I rescued you out of slavery
and brought you out of Mitsrayim (Egypt).[10]
I sent Mosheh (Moses), Aharon (Aaron),[11] and Miryam (Miriam)[12] to you.
5 My people, remember what Moav's (Moab's) King Balak devised,
and how Be'or's son Bil'am (Balaam) answered that king[13]
as you went from Shitim to Gilgal.[14]
Think about that so you can know Yahweh's righteous actions."

The desire of Master God

6 What should I bring to Yahweh,
as I bow down to the high God?
Should I come to him with burnt offerings,
with year-old calves?
7 Will Yahweh be pleased with thousands of rams,
or with ten thousand rivers of oil?
Should I sacrifice my oldest child to pay for my disobedience—
my biological offspring to pay for my own sin?
8 He has told humanity what is good,
and what Yahweh requires from you:
Act justly,
love kindness,
and walk humbly with your god.[15]
9 Yahweh is making an announcement to the city—
even now wisdom is calling out to you:
"Pay attention to the rod of punishment,
and to the one who has put it in place.
10 There's dishonest wealth in wicked people's houses,
along with hated false weights and measures.
11 Should I consider people to be innocent if they use fraudulent scales
or a bag of deceptive weights?
12 The city's rich men are full of violence,
the inhabitants have spoken lies,
and you can't believe a word that they say.
13 Therefore I'll strike you with a terrible blow,
and I'll make you into a desolate country because of your sins.
14 You'll eat but not be satisfied—your emptiness will remain inside you.
You'll store goods away but not be able to save them, and what you do save I will be taken by force.
15 You'll sow, but not harvest.
You'll tread the olives, but not anoint yourselves with their oil.
You'll press grapes, but not drink the wine.
16 As a city, you've kept the regulations made by King Omri,[16]
and behaved similarly to Ahav's evil descendants.[17]
You walk by their advice, so I'll make you into a ruin.
People will hiss at your inhabitants,
and my people will mock you."

Dysfunctional society

7:1 I'm miserable because I've become like the gathering of left-over fruit,
and like the grapes that have already been gleaned.
There's no grape clusters to eat,
and none of the ripe early figs that I really felt like.
2 The faithful people have disappeared from the land.
There is no godly person among all mankind.
They all lie in wait to shed blood—
each one hunts his own fellow countryman with a net.
3 They're very good at doing harm:
the leader asks for money,
the judge is ready for bribes,
and the powerful man is telling others what he wants to obtain,
and so they scheme together.
4 The best of them is like a thorn-bush.
The most upright is worse than a prickly hedge.

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10 **RV 6:4 · Cross-ref.** Exo 12:50-51.
11 **RV 6:4 · Cross-ref.** Exo 4:10-16.
12 **RV 6:4 · Cross-ref.** Exo 15:20.
13 **RV 6:5 · Cross-ref.** Num 22:2–24:25.
14 **RV 6:5 · Cross-ref.** Josh 3:1–4:19.
15 **RV 6:8 · Cross-ref.** Deu 10:12-13.
16 **RV 6:16 · Cross-ref.** 1Ki 16:23-28.
17 **RV 6:16 · Cross-ref.** 1Ki 16:29-34; 21:25-26.

Readers' Version

It's the day foretold by your watchmen—
the day of your punishment.
Now is the time of their confusion.
5 Don't trust any neighbour.
Put no confidence in any friend.
Be careful about what you say
even to the woman who lies in your arms,
6 because sons dishonour their fathers,
daughters rise up against their mothers,
and daughters-in-law against their mothers-in-law.
A person's enemies are the people in their own household.[18]
7 But as for me, I'll look out for Yahweh.
I'll wait for the god who saves me.
My god will hear me.
8 Don't be happy about what happened to me, my enemy.
After I fall, I'll get up and stand again.
When I sit in darkness, Yahweh will be a light for me.
9 Because I sinned against Yahweh, I'll endure his rage
until he pleads my cause on my behalf, and executes judgement for me.
He'll bring me to the light, and I'll see him rescue me in his justice.
10 Then my enemy will see it,
and shame will cover the one who said to me,
"Where is Yahweh your god?"
My eyes will look at her;
she'll be trampled down like the mud in the streets.
11 The time will come for rebuilding your walls.
On that day your boundaries will be greatly expanded.
12 On that day your people will come to you,
from Ashur (Assyria) and the cities in Mitsrayim (Egypt),
from Mitsrayim to the Perat (Euphrates) River,
from sea to sea,
and from mountain to mountain.
13 But the land will be desolate
because of the people who are living there,
because of the fruit of their actions.

The saving/explaining of Master God

14 Shepherd your people with your staff—
the flock of your inheritance.
They live alone in a forest,
surrounded by pastureland.
Let them graze in Bashan and Gilead as in the old days.

God's mercy towards Yisrael

15 Just like in the days when you were rescued out of Mitsrayim (Egypt),
I'll display miracles to them.
16 The nations will see and be ashamed of all their power.
They'll put their hands over their mouths—
and act like their ears are deaf.
17 They'll lick the dust like a snake—
like creatures that crawl on the earth.
They'll be trembling as they come out of their fortresses.
They'll come with fear to you, our god Yahweh,
and they'll be afraid because of you.
18 What other God is there like you, who takes away sin?
Who forgives the disobedience of the remnant of his inherited people?
He doesn't stay angry forever,
because he happily demonstrates his loyal commitment.
19 You'll have compassion on us yet again.
You'll wipe away our disobedience.
You will throw all our sins into the deepest parts of the sea.
20 You'll give truth to Ya'akov (Jacob)
and loyal commitment to Avraham,
as you promised to our ancestors long ago.

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18 RV 7:6 · Cross-ref. Mat 10:35-36; Luk 12:53.